
Mr. NISBETT's
SECOND LETTER

T O

Mr. MORGAN.

Now what cannot a Man of Mr. Morgan's invincible Confidence say ? [Mr. Francourt's Enthusiasm retorted, p. 10.]

Nay, this Writer not only stifles his Evidence ; but, which is worse still, he charges against Evidence, against the clearest Evidence to the contrary, p. 21.

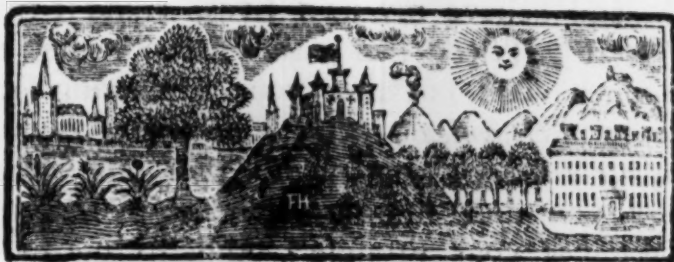
Really, Sir, I cannot but grieve to see the Pen of a Minister thus prostituted to Scandal and Calumny, p. 29.

Mr. Morgan's own Faith is every jot as blind, Mechanical, and Enthusiastical as his Neighbours, p. 38.

L O N D O N,

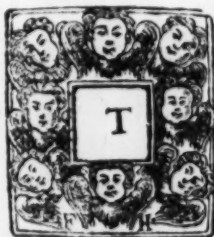
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Mr. NISBETT'S
 SECOND LETTER
 T O
 Mr. MORGAN.

S I R,



HIS attending you so late as it does, Good Manners oblige me to give you some reason for it. A Friend of mine that had read your P. S. before my seeing it, assur'd me I might sleep in a whole Skin, for any harm you had done me, by answering any one single Article of my Letter ; your whole Performance being only a Demonstration what a Bad Cause you had undertaken. Whereupon, as it came to hand, I laid it by for a proper Entertainment when more at leisure than I was at that time.

A 2

Nor

Nor, in truth, when I came to read it myself, and believe my own Eyes, could I perceive, my Friend had either flatter'd me, or wronged you : For *after your Hectoring Epistle to Britannicus, what a particular succinct Answer you would give to all I had said, what have you done more than shewn, how short you fall of your Promise ? And, to use some of your assuming Elegancies, have made it evident to the whole World, that you have not defended your self ; that you did not really design to defend your self ; and that you knew well, you could not possibly be defended.*

For had you thought otherwise of your forlorn Cause, may I believe, you could ever have been so overseen as to inform your Readers, in effect, that you keep an Office of Intelligence, whither all that passes in private Conversation is brought to you, for your answering Books that were never yet printed, and that you know nothing of, but from those whose Memories may be none of the most faithful ?

And because we all know, the Dead tell no Tales, to secure an imaginary Victory to yourself, you submit to become Under-workman to 'Squire *Bickerstaff*, by taking upon you to bury People before they are dead. Nay, you out-do your Master in his own Art : For, whereas he was only for proving some to be dead, who fancy'd themselves alive ; you will have us celebrate the Funeral of a Person whom

whom you affirm more than once, to be actually in his Grave.

A Hint, I suppose, you took from no common Instance ; I mean, *O. Cromwell*, whose Soul (as one of the Faculty that attended him informs us) had no sooner left the Body in the turbulent manner it did, than, after all their Art to the contrary, his Carcass so stunk, they were forc'd privately to bury it out of hand, and then, to shew the self-denying Temper of those *reputed Saints*, bestow such pompous Funeral Rites on an empty Coffin, as no Crown'd Head, with us, before, or since, was ever honoured with.

Thus, Sir, as 'Squire *Bickerstaff* has brought you to bury People before they are dead ; so for executing your Office of an Undertaker in an Order not usual, 'tis plain, you want a Precedent ; nor even for talking so dismally as you do upon the Occasion. *Dion Cassius* in the Life of *Domitian*, tells an odd Story, how that Emperour sending for many Senators and Knights at Midnight, shut 'em up in a House all hung with Black, and treated them exactly as at a Funeral, talking at times in so dreadful a manner, that they look'd upon themselves as dead Men ; yet, after he had a while diverted himself with their Fears, he dismiss'd them as safe and sound as they came ; as 'tis hoped you design by *Britannicus*.

Tho'

Tho' I do not charge you with having a hand in the Plot, any more than you do me; yet a Man of your long Head may have Views of another kind. We all know, *Britannicus's* Employ is of some consequence to the Publick, and Benefit to himself: Could you therefore so sink his Character, as to have him laid aside as a dead useless thing unfit for the Place he has, you might hope to see him succeeded by one (perhaps your own sweet self) that might take more care of the Growth of Heresie and Infidelity than he hath yet done, and so kill and take possession at once.

But to save you that trouble, unless my Correspondent banter me, contrary to the Opinion I have of his Sincerity; *Britannicus* is so far from being dispatch'd by you, that he is in a very good State of Health, and his Hands full of Business increasing upon him daily; which he gratefully acknowledges owing in some measure to you. The general Approbation his *Reflexions upon Reason* met with among the Learned, and the quick Sale of Two Editions, rais'd your pious Indignation: You fell upon him in a Stile and Manner that seems natural to your Pen, by carping here and there at some Passages having little relation to the main Design of the Piece, and even most of these misrepresented; as, p. 7. and p. 14. where not having the Fear of God before your Eyes, you charge him with asserting the quite contrary to what appears in p. 16,

17, 21, 39, 40, 41, 42, 73, 74. of the *Reflexions*. You represent him, p. 18. as asserting a horrid Piece of Prophaness, which he mentions only as an Objection of the Modern Free-Thinkers, whose Stile he uses; and wickedly tell him, *He lays it down as the Foundation of the Christian Faith*; with some others, which every honest intelligent Reader may easily discover; and how you came to mistake, is best known to your self.

As this shew'd your good Inclinations, 'tis known, it made *Britannicus* to be taken for a Man of uncommon Abilities, who could write so learnedly upon a nice Subject, what you and your Fraternity, with all your Industry can find so few Objections against; which, tho' he submitted to the Drudgery of Answering, yet it was thought by impartial Judges a very needless Undertaking; at the best, it was venturing Something against Nothing, staking Sobriety and Truth against Banter and Falshood; for which reason he laid it by: But that you might not pass without some Animadversion, and thereby be tempted to be wiser in your own Conceit than you are already, I, your Humble Servant, a Man of more Leisure, of a chearful Fancy, and mirthful Countenance like your self, gave you one Admonition, and now desire your Patience once more, to see, after a little taking asunder, *Whose Engine holds Water best, yours or mine.*

The

The Author of the *Reflexions* having undertaken to prove, what one would think, none but a downright Enthusiast would ever deny, *That Reason disengaged from the moral Disorders of the Soul, is a noble Guide to Human Life*; Up start you, and tell him, he talks like an Apothecary, and knows little of the matter. Let (say you) *the Church dismiss her usurped Authority, and leave Men at liberty in Things indifferent*, Then see the blessed Alterations that would follow; delivering your self with such a haughty Laconical Air, as if there were not so much as Two Words to the Bargain: When I presum'd to put in my slender Verdict, humbly submitting it to your Second Thoughts, whether the Remedy were not worse than the Disease; the Liberty you speak of not being attainable without a *Comprehension*, which must naturally end in *Confusion*.

I had no sooner nam'd, as you stile it, *that startling dreadful Word COMPREHENSION*, but to shew how ill you can bear Contradiction, and how little of the Liberty you claim for your self, you are willing to allow another, you maul me with great Variety of Wit and Fancy; assuring your Reader, lest he should regard any thing that comes from me, *That I am fallen into an odd Train of Disorders, partly Hypochondriacal, partly Malignant; that this Stimulus has contracted all my Nerves; that the Spasm seized me whilst I was laughing*;

ing ; that 'tis wonderful to observe what a Figure I make: For tho' I still endeavour to laugh, and strive to put on a merry Countenance, yet every one sees (with your Eyes, no doubt) that 'tis meer Affectation and Grimace, since I discover evident Symptoms of the Plague in the Bowels ; with more such incoherent Mountebank-Stuff, which I shall not give my self the trouble to transcribe, and ought to beg my Reader's pardon for this ; which, without my help, plainly shews your Mistake ; that 'tis your self, not your Humble Servant, that is under the Disorder you describe, in Language which few use, but those whose Resentment or Distemper has carried beyond their Reason.

But to let that pass : To shew how dreadful a Writer you are, and that you can stab with a Pen as fatally as a Bully with a Weapon, you had, as you fancied, no sooner dispatch'd *Britannicus* out of the way, but you give me notice my turn is next : And lest I should plead such short Warning scarce fair, some time before the Publishing, if not the Writing your P. S. out comes an Advertisement of the dangerous State of Health one Mr. *Nisbett* was in, or Words importing his being upon his last Legs.

Because I never understood the *Nisbetts* coming in with the Conquerour, or had any great Antiquity to boast of, I was pleased to hear, one of my Name had distinguished himself so, as to be taken notice of in that pub-

lick manner, little dreaming it was my single self all the while, till your P. S. undeceiv'd me : Then, indeed, I began to be more serious, thinking if I was on my last Legs, it concerned me not to trifle away the few Moments I had left. Presently I felt my Pulse ; but could find no Alteration there. I ask'd my Friends how I look'd : They assured me, they saw no Change ; but that I might live, in all probability, to a good Old Age, unless I should happen to employ you as my Physician, which I have therefore solemnly engaged never to do.

After all, if it is in your power to dispatch me at pleasure, I beg the liberty of a short Speech at parting, a Favour seldom denied a condemned Criminal. COMPREHENSION, you know, is the Word that ruffled your calm Christian Temper to that degree, that I was almost resolved to provoke your Fury no further : But since Valour and Generosity are not always afunder, I was in hopes, after I had explain'd my self, and produced proper Evidences on my side, you and I might possibly come to a better Understanding.

You are pleased to set me down as a very great Banterer, for endeavouring to shew, that in case of the General Comprehension implied in your Scheme, Infant-Baptism, amongst the rest, would soon grow out of use ; where Quakers, Arians, Socinians and Anabaptists had the power to express their real Sentiments of
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(II)

that Holy Sacrament : This, I say, you laugh at ; but, let me tell you, without producing the least Shadow of an Argument to invalidate it ; for a very good Reason, because you cannot ; Matters of Fact being stubborn things and not easily baffled, or beat out of Countenance.

There was a time, Instances of this nature were no Rarities. I'll give you one I had from good hands. In the *Oliverian* Age, when all (but those whose only Crime was their Loyalty) had the Liberty you contend for, a *Tinker*, forsooth, possesses himself of a Church not many Miles from you of some Hundreds *per Annum* Revenue. How it far'd with the other Sacrament, I leave you to guess : But for Baptism, 'tis known, the Inhabitants carried their Children to the neighbouring Ministers. So that you see, a Man may smile, and speak such a Truth as you cannot contradict.

But perhaps you will say, All this is only an Old Wife's Tale, or that one Swallow makes no Summer ; COMPREHENSION must not be run down for a single Inconvenience, considering the Blessings and Benefits both Temporal and Spiritual that otherwise attend it, and how strangely Vertue, Piety and True Religion would certainly flourish upon its Establishment.

Hereto pray spare me a Word. I take you for a Man abounding too much in your own Sence, to be contradicted with Temper : There-

fore if you please, the Question between us, shall not be *Who is in the right ?* but *Whether Two and Three make Five ?* I mean, whether what has been, may be, by the same Cause producing the same Effect? For then may be easily foreseen the notable Effects your Scheme of Liberty will produce, by those it did in the celebrated Period betwixt 1640, and 1660, as the Writings of those who saw and felt too what they described, do fully attest. Tho', I confess, it opens a Scene not to be view'd without Horror, when, to the great Dishonour of God and Religion, the Blackest and Worst of Villainies were daily perpetrated, under the pretence of the strictest Purity and Holiness. Yet since 'tis your Pleasure to have it so, out let it come, and shift for it self as it can.

Mr. *Symons*, in the Preface to his Vindication of King *Charles* the First, gives this Account of the Reformation that followed the Liberty you are for reviving. " They (saith he of
 " the Men of those Times) were a Generati-
 " on of People that have done more Disgrace
 " to Christ's Gospel, than ever was offered since
 " Christ's time. Never did any in so short a
 " space ascend to that Zenith of Villainy as
 " they have done ; or pretend more Godliness
 " with the Practice of so much Wickedness.
 " The Papists, in three or four hundred Years
 " were never able to reach that superlative
 " Pitch of Dissimulation, Hypocrisie, Pride and
 " Cruelty, as these have done in three or four.

And

And by what means they merited the Character he gives them, turn to p. 74, of the Treatise, you'll there find *viz.* " By pulling down
 " all Christian Order, and Forms of Publick
 " Worship and Service tending to Decency and
 " Edification ; by casting down, defiling and
 " defaming the Houses of God, turning many
 " of them into Stables, Slaughter-Houses, Pri-
 " sons and Jakes : They have made Close-
 " Stools of Fonts and Pulpits, done as bad to
 " Communion-Tables : They have rent the
 " Holy Bible in pieces, scorn'd at the Sacra-
 " ments, baptiz'd Horses, robb'd Churches of
 " Sacramental Utensils, as Plate, Linnen, &c.
 " calling it Idolatrous and Superstitious, be-
 " cause it had been only used in Christ's Ser-
 " vice, &c.

Lest you should except against Mr *Symons*, as exasperated by his Sufferings in the Royal Cause, but more for being the * Editor of the King's Book (which the Party would fain have none of his, that his barbarous Murder may be sooner forgotten) look but into Two Tracts in the *London Cafes*, entitul'd, *An Argument for Union*, and *An Exhortation to Union*. You will find in both most of Mr. *Symons's* Charge abundantly confirm'd, with a further Account, what a Friend Liberty is to Morality and Religion, from the Authors there cited living in

* *Vide Echard's Hist. Vol. 2. p. 679.*

those

those Times, and no Friends to Prelates ; as (to give you a Taste) “ That tho’ they (the Secretaries who had the Liberty you have markt out for the present Age) “ pretended to “ to more Holiness, and greater Power of “ Godliness than other Men ; yet in four Years “ more Wickedness and provoking Abominations* abounded with more Errours, Blasphemies and Confusions than in eighty Years before, even to the denying the Authority of “ the Scriptures, the Resurrection and Immortality of the Soul”. And if the Indulgence of the present Age can produce with Impunity such notable Performances as *The Fable of the Bees, Independent Whiggs, Mr. C——’s Essay upon the Truth of the Christian Religion*, with numberless others, in contempt and defiance of Revelation and common Sense, we may well imagine what Improvements would soon be made, if the Charter of Infidelity were enlarged according to your Scheme ; when every Man shall have the Liberty of saying and doing whatsoever is right in his own Eyes.

You may say, as I am satisfied you will, every thing a bad Cause will bear, that Liberty is here misrepresented, tho’ by Eye-Witnesses of what they wrote. Therefore pray dispense with one Authority more, and then except against it as you think fit ; and this shall be taken from the Judgment of the *late Lord Chief Justice Sir Matthew Hale*, *humbly dedicated to*
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*the honourable the Judges, &c. by the faithful
Publisher, RICHARD BAXTER.*

“ I do remember (saith his Lordship, p.20.)
“ in the Beginning of our late Troubles, the
“ only Party that visibly appear'd, were some
“ that desired some Reformation in Church-
“ Matters: And when that Party had obtained
“ under the Name of *the Presbyterian Party*,
“ in a very little while there arose a more sub-
“ lime Party of Men called *the Independent* or
“ *Congregational Men*, which much despised the
“ Former, as not arriv'd to a just Measure of
“ Reformation. Shortly after that, there arose
“ a kind of *Lay-Party*, which as much under-
“ valued the *Independent*, and indeed, the Mi-
“ nistry in general.

“ After that, there arose a Party discrimi-
“ nating it self from all the former, *viz.*
“ *the Quakers*. These various Parties were
“ as so many Subdivisions and Rectificati-
“ ons of what went before.

And allowing each Party the Liberty of a-
bounding in his own sence, in the following
Paragraph he subjoyns the Impossibility of e-
ver reconciling them all into one, saying,

“ Now the means of holding up this Dis-
“ crimination of Parties, are certain select O-
“ pinions, Practices or Modes, which are like
“ the Badges and Colours that give each Par-
“ ty his Denomination, Distinction and Discri-
“ mination: And consequently, these discrimi-
“ native Badges have as great a rate set up-
“ on

“ on them as each Party sets upon it self;
 “ and therefore must be upheld under the very
 “ Notion of the Life of Religion, and must be
 “ maintained with the greatest Fervour imaginable.

Thus far that Excellent Writer, whose discerning Judgment the Dissenters by their present Practice have taken care effectually to confirm : For after all your Boasts what Wonders you would do with the Liberty you enjoy, are you not still dividing and subdividing, without the least Prospect of that Union, which nothing but your different Opinions and perverse Spirits can obstruct? To give one Instance among many : At your first coming where you are, did you find more than one Presbyterian Meeting? Or were there more within Memory? Yet such was your Dexterity at *Uniting*, that *One* is already become *Two*, and with a little more of your help, may multiply further in time : For, as I am informed, because your Brother of the *other Synagogue* deliver'd in your Hearing, an Orthodox Discourse against the *Arian Heresie*, you were no sooner got home, than you set about pelting him with an Epistle of Exceptions, to fright him from a Subject that might tend to unite those whom you had divided. And after all your Pretences to the contrary, here's another Instance what a Back-Friend you are to Liberty, by your Zeal to have your Brother's Judgment submit to your own.

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The Design of my urging these things in opposition to your Scheme, is to shew by what the Publick has already seen and felt, what will be the certain Consequences of that Liberty which you so madly and inconsistently plead for ; and that whatever your Intent be, your Engine is so far from holding Water, that 'tis really a *Cacofogo*, or Spit-Fire ; and were our Canons, Articles and Rubrick (which you treat with so much Contempt) once laid aside, we should as naturally be over-run with Disorder and Confusion, as the Land is by the Sea, after the Fences are broke down.

And, to shew you, I am not singular herein, or only catch here and there at a warm Expression or two casually dropping from a partial Writer (tho' I scarce fancy you will say Mr. *Baxter* and Judge *Hale* were such) pray take the deliberate and united Sense of the House of Commons, in their Address to King *Charles II.* upon his Proclamation for Indulgence, in 1662. [*Vide Echard's Hist.*] *Which, they stick not to tell his Majesty, will be a Cause of increasing Sects and Sectaries, whose Numbers will weaken the true Protestant Profession so far, that it will at last, be difficult for it to defend it self against them!* Adding, among other Reasons well worth perusing, that *in time some prevalent Sect may contend for an Establishment (viz. of a general Toleration) which, for ought can be foreseen, may end in Popery.*

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To

To bring this Head to a Conclusion: By *Liberty*, you must intend either the *present Toleration*, (which sure you enjoy in its utmost Extent;) or the having it so extended, that all Parties shall be upon a Level, to the creating more Disturbances and Miseries than were ever known in the same Compass of time since Christianity had a Being. So wide are you of the Truth, in asserting as you do, *That the exercising a Spiritual Tyranny over the Consciences of Men, is the Ground of all the Enmities, Church-Divisions and Party-Rage in the Christian World.* If for opposing what you so positively deliver for Doctrine, I am become so much your Enemy, that nothing less than my Death will content you; considering my Vouchers, I have the Famous Count *Gondomar's* Comfort on my side, who being in danger of Over-setting in a Boat, with several of our Nobility, pleasantly said, It would never grieve him to go off with so much good Company about him.

Reflexions of this kind turning so little to some Peoples Advantage and Reputation, for your own sake I will call another Cause. *Church-Communion* (say you, p. 6.) *upon Scripture-Terms, is the very thing he (i. e. my self) fears; he cannot bear the Thought: This is the thing at which his Soul trembles.* I understand you, that's what you take for a Subject, no one, except he will venture burying alive, dares engage you upon. This Confidence in
your

your great Abilities inclining you not to despair of even a *Comprehension*, with all its Difficulties, taking effect at last, without naming the time when there was any thing like *Union* among the Dissenters, or the least likelihood of their ever being more united, unless in their Endeavours to overturn the establish'd Religion, whereof at present there is no great Occasion; when you might have nam'd the time the *Covenant* was in full force, and Canons, Articles and Rubrick out of date, to the letting in all Disorder, Confusion and Immorality for the whole time they were so.

But lest our Church should expect her share in this desired Union, without coming to you for a Model, you declare, in effect, her present Terms of Communion, *An affronting the Understandings of Men, and a most ridiculous Banter upon common Sense.*----- *Such a Complication of Absurdity and Impudence as cannot be parallell'd even in Julian himself.* And this as the natural Result of Two doughty Questions you suppose me in too great a Fright to answer with Temper, viz. 1. *Whether his* (Pray, let it be the Church's) *Canons, Articles and Rubricks are necessary Rules for Christian Faith and Practice?* 2. (which ought to have been first) *Whether the H. Scripture, without these, is not the only Rule, and a sufficient Rule of Christian Faith and Practice?*

Several Authors write of Persons of great Learning, who from a sudden Fright, a Knock

o' the Pate, or the like, have fallen under such a strange Loss of Memory, that they have forgot their own Names. By this second Question of yours, one would think the like Accident had befallen you ; otherwise, how came you to forget the Sixth Article of our Religion, which, you must know, you once subscribed to in these very Words, *viz. Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to Salvation ; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not required of any Man as an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation.* After such a plain positive Declaration, can you deny that your First Question, (wherein, by the way, are no less than three distinct Fallacies, according to the known Rules of Logick) doth not answer it self ? Our Canons, Articles and Rubrick being no other than Occasional Provisions, so far necessary, as lawfully enjoyn'd according to Scripture (1 Cor. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 14. 40. Eph. 4. 3. 1 Pet. 2. 13.) for the sake of Unity, Order and Edification ; that however you please to treat it, we take our Communion to be on Scripture-Terms, and on a Scripture-Foot ; unless you can prove, which methinks you should not undertake, that the Order and Decency so strictly required, was like Mr. *Emlin's* Baptism, to cease with the Apostles, and that thenceforward Christians were free from all Restraint, and might safely run into all the Divisions which your Scheme of Liberty seems intended to promote.

After

After such a Home-Thrust at our Communion, on purpose to continue the Dissenters in their Separation, your Jestling, as you do with me, about Oaths, is no more than a Flea-biting: For tho' you name me, 'tis the Government you have your Eye upon, when you say, *That all the Oaths and Subscriptions in the World serve only to keep out honest conscientious Men, &c.* But pray, is not this very ill timed? Is it not to say in other Words, that the Papists and Non-Jurors are the only honest conscientious Men amongst us? Whilst the rest of the Nation are giving his Majesty the Security the late Act requires? *Are they those that will profess, subscribe and swear any thing for their own Interest?* A fine Complement to the whole Nation, o' my Word! Nay, and to your self too: For you confess you have sworn, and I dare say, you have subscribed. By your own Rule, what are you then for both? An honest, conscientious Soul, no doubt on't.

Your hand being in upon this Head, 'tis a Wonder you had not gone through-stitch, by appealing to the *solemn League and Covenant*, which would have justified you beyond all Exception: For as that exceeded all other Forms in Length, neither did it come behind the most sacred in the Solemnity of its administering; which was thus: After the Minister of each Parish throughout *England and Wales* had himself taken the *Covenant* before the Committee, the *Sunday* following he read it, with a large
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Exhortation in the Pulpit, and then administered it to every Man in his Parish above the Age of Eighteen, returning the Names of the Recusants. And yet, after all, this long-winded Oath taken as before, unluckily fell so short of reforming the Nation, that never did People in any one Age arrive to that monstrous height of Wickedness as did those Saints. They who had solemnly sworn by the Covenant to defend the King's Person, actually murder'd him in cold Blood before his own Palace.

Having made thus bold with the Church-Communion, the Clergy cannot expect your Mercy : Wherefore (say you, p. 8, 9.) If the Minister of a Parish, tho' lawfully instituted and inducted, happen to prove *in truth and reality a Man of no Religion at all, but to all intents and purposes an Atheist*, (A very modest Supposition truly, and which comes very decently from a Man of your *exemplary Piety, Humility, Temperance and Chastity*.) Why then----

What then? ----- Why, the People (say you) are as much at liberty to choose their own Pastor, as a Man to send for the Farrier he likes best, for the Cure of his Horse. From which Catholick Determination of yours, I crave leave something to dissent; because, with humble submission, provided the Service of the Church be duly and regularly performed, tho' by a Man of an ill Life, and in truth, a Disgrace to his Order, the People are not instantly to forsake our Communion, and run to the
next

next Meeting-House, when the same Pains may carry them to a Neighbour-Church; since you know, one half of the Crimes you speak of, will both suspend and deprive any Clergyman in either Province, and make room for another: And till this is legally done, you know who said both to the Multitude and the Disciples (*Matt. 23. 2, 3.*) *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses Seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their Works; for they say, and do not.* So that on a Scripture-foot, here's no need of a Farrier yet, unless to lead Men into Schism.

But, pray, how shall this *Atheism to all intents and purposes* appear? Oh! belike, no longer ago than last *Trinity-Sunday*, he mounted the Pulpit, and taking for his Text *Pf. 14.* Part of the first Verse, *There is no God*, he told his Hearers, that the foregoing Words, *The Fool hath said in his Heart*, both here and *Pf. 53.* were at first barely a Marginal Note, till once upon a time (tho' what time, no Author pretends to say exactly) this, and several others, particularly *1 John 5. 7.* gave a sudden Leap into the Text, and there seated themselves without any Authority from the Criticks: But, adds he, had we been suffer'd to have finish'd our late intended Edition of *Servetus*, they had all been proved spurious, in spite of all the modern Asserters of that unintelligible Jargon of *One in Essence, and Three in Person.*

How

How such a Discourse may take in some Assemblies, is not for me to guess: But certainly, should any Clergyman on this side *Tweed* deliver himself at this rate, and the Ordinary not proceed against this Monster with the utmost Severity, I should take the Ordinary, whether Bishop or Arch-Bishop, to be as faulty as the Clerk, according to the known Rule, *Qui non prohibet, cum potest, jubet*. Wherefore you must e'en take your Atheist to your self, and provide for him elsewhere, there being no room for him with us, till your Latitudinarian Scheme has made it.

Some Mens Meaning may be known by their Gaping: Then why may not this modest Supposition of such an *Atheistical Priest*, that *neither fears God, nor regards Man*, imply our having such amongst us; and that this is the chief Cause of the Separation betwixt us and the Dissenters? Right! But then pray allow me the Liberty of my Supposal too, which is, that some of the *Cobler of Gloucester's* Old Libels falling lately into your hands, you have been comparing them with the present Weekly Invectives against the Clergy; whose Design can be no Secret to him that will put things and things together.

Not to run so far back as honest *Martin Mar-Prelate*; because, tho' his Will was good, his Luck was very naught; we will only begin, where all the Miseries and Distractions the Nation has ever since groaned under, began, and
where

whereto the late exorbitant Power of *France* ow'd its first Rise, the most unnatural Rebellion of 1641. No sooner was the Ruin of our Hierarchy determined, than the best means to bring it to bear, was agreed to be, the exposing the helpless Clergy, and rendring them vile and abominable in the Eyes of the People: And for this end, the Word was presently given out through the Kingdom, for all to come in that would, to inform against them, * Committees for that purpose being appointed, whereof Mr. *White's* was Chief. Accordingly, all that had been prosecuted for their Vicious Lives, Non-conformity, not paying their just Dues, or had conceiv'd any Prejudice against their lawful Minister, flock'd in with their Petitions, and turn'd him out; as they could not well fail of doing, when no Exception against the Witnesses was allowed, and when the way was, to put all sorts of Crimes into the Charge, and one Article tolerably proved, made good all the rest. Hence follow'd strange Havock in all Livings of Value, where the right Owners were sure not to continue long, if true to their Oaths and Subscriptions, though else as worthy Men in all respects as most Ages can boast of.

* *Clar. Hist. Symons's Vindicat. Nalson's Collect. Vol. II. p. 234, &c.*

D

But

But bare turning them out was not sufficient; to justify their Barbarity, Mr. *White* publishes his *Centuries*, containing the vilest and blackest Calumnies, upon the innocent Sufferers: And lest the Bulk and Price might baulk the Sale, Care was taken to abridge it, that no one might be without so choice a Manual. So great a Provocation, I believe, you will scarce deny, deserved a just Return. Mr. *White's* Book being shewn his Majesty, and his Leave ask'd to confront it with a proper Reply, such was the Meekness of that Excellent Prince, he expressly denied it, by his most Christian Temper depriving Posterity of the best Light to judge, who at that time were the fittest to cast the first Stone. Only, *as bloody and deceitful Men shall not live out half their Days*, Ps. 55.23. neither did Mr. *White*, but died distracted in 1644, crying out, How many Clergymen, their Wives and Children, he had undone, [*Echard's Hist.*] So little time did this unhappy Man survive the Mischief he had done, to the Disgrace of a Liberal Education.

After the Restoration, the same good People fell with a fresh Appetite to the old Art of Calumny and Detraction, to disappoint, if possible, the *Act of Uniformity*, then upon the Anvil, with this Improvement, that whereas they had all along affirmed their Diabolical Proceedings to be *the Cause of God*, and that he was on their side, from the Wickedness he suffered
to

to prevail ; now they gave out, * that he more openly declared it from Heaven, by certain surprising Sight in the Air, seen only by themselves, in order to foretel the Troubles themselves were hatching ; as we may fairly guess from the Silence of all other Writers of the same time.

But this Trick not taking, nor the Nation so soon bugbear'd out of their Senses, all the late Visions disappear'd at once, to make room for downright Scandal ; which, proper Instruments that would go through thick and thin, were made choice of to disperse ; and among others, the *Cobler of Gloucester*, as he styles himself, one *Ralph Wallis*, who from a Shoemaker, became a most scurrilous impudent Libeller as ever blurred Paper ; undertaking, with the Helps sent him ready dress'd from all Parts, to blacken the Clergy. The Title-Page of his Third Libel, printed in 1668, begins *verbatim* thus : *Room for the Cobler of Gloucester and his Wife, with several Cart-Loads of abominable, irregular, pitiful, stinking Priests, &c* the chief of which were Archbishop *Sheldon*, Bishop *Morley*, *Nicholson*, and others eminent for their great Piety, Learning, and Sufferings, whom, without charging with any Crime, he is for turning to Grass, seizing their Revenues to save Taxes, and supplying their Places with those

* *Vide Wood's Athenæ Oxon.* Vol. II. p. 210.

whose rebellious Preachments had help'd to ruine the Nation.

And to make the World believe, how much reason he had on his side, he subjoyns all the vile Stuff he could pick up, of some few wretched Itinerants poor Curates, and as poor Incumbents ; not regarding what Sir *Benjamin Rudyerd* told the Commons in more Speeches than one, *That scandalous Livings cannot but have scandalous Ministers* ; concealing all the while, that his black List, almost to a Man, consisted of Persons educated under Presbyterian Tutors : Such is the Purity of their Discipline, and such their Policy, to blacken the Church of *England* with the immoral Lives of their own Creatures.

But you will say, how does this affect the Body of the Dissenters ? I heartily wish it did not, even from their first leaving us ; and that their taking the Work out of Satan's hands, and doing his Drudgery, in *accusing the Brethren*, had not been more serviceable to the Rebellion, than all their Cannon in the Field ; Whereof some are so sensible, that they are vigorously carrying on the same Cause by the same Means, in hopes of such an End as a generous Enemy must lament.

You certainly were very arch in that grave Question, Whether *the Church* be a *Father* or a *Mother* ? If in so ridiculous a Remark you only intended to hit the low Taste of your Admirers, it may be pardonable : But if you really

really design'd to be witty, you shew your self as despicable a *Pretender to Wit*, as you are to *Science*. So I shall pass by your Joke, which was the only Answer you could make to the Questions I propos'd, and ask you one grave Question more. Suppose your Scheme obtained, and all the Dissenters, from a particular Aversion to Oaths, Canons, Articles and Rubrick, were suffer'd to go their own Lengths without Restraint; so long as they pretended being on a *Scripture-foot*, do you in sober sadness think, that no Confusion, no Disturbance would follow in the State? If you say, Not, give me leave to convince you of the contrary, by a known Instance I hinted before, which is this; Tho' O. Cromwell is characteriz'd to have acted a more Tyrannical and Arbitrary Part than all the Kings of England together since the Norman Conquest*, riding the Nation at the rate he did; yet he found such an Over-match in the growing Sectaries, as made him cry out, with all his Guards, and the Devil, his good Friend and Ally, about him, *They must be satisfy'd; They must be satisfy'd, or we shall all run into Blood again.* (Echard's Hist. p. 734.)

And lest you should say, this was only a sudden Corruption, owing to a prosperous Rebellion, pray hear an Author or two describing some People in their proper Colours, long be-

* Vide Wellwood's Memoirs, p. 100.

fore the Rebellion began. The first shall be no less a Person than his present Majesty's Royal Great Grandfather and Predecessor in the Throne which he now fills with so much Glory; who in his Book dedicated to Prince Henry, to instruct him how to rule, and keep the Crown upon his Head, particularly cautions him (*Lib. 2. p. 44.*) to beware of the Puritans, as the very Pest of Church and State, whom, saith he, no Favours can engage, Oaths bind, or Promises oblige; who breathe nothing but Seditious and Calumny, and are beyond all Measure ambitiously aspiring. I call (adds his Majesty) the great God to witness (and sure I ought to be sincere in making my Will) that I have not found more Ingratitude and Perjury among the barbarous Highlanders, or thievish Borderers, than among those Phanatical Spirits, whose Teachers and Ring-leaders, as you regard your Quiet and Tranquillity, never suffer in your Countrey, unless as Socrates did his Wife Xantippe, to exercise your Patience. This, and much more, with a long serious Complaint of that Royal Author at the Hampton-Court Conference, (p. 79, &c.) give too much credit to the Words of a Foreigner (*Pet. Bertii Orbis Breviar.*) about the Beginning of K. Charles the First's unhappy Reign. *Habent hoc proprium Calvinistæ, ut statum in quem irrepserunt, evertant: neque antè conquiescant quam ipsi rerum potiantur, Irrisores, turbulenti, factiosi, disputaces, ingrati, arrogantes supra quam dici aut credi potest.* A bad Character, I own; yet justified

stified to a Tittle, by what soon followed ; and will be again, whenever it is in your Power to Bite as well as Bark.

To all this, I see your Reply in readiness. The Pot must not pretend to give the Kettle Hard Names, nor the Clergy of the Church of *England* pretend to Prate ; *Who*, (say you, *P. S. p. 14.*) *take the Oaths, and then banter, pretend to wash them down with a Glass of Wine, and quote Hudibras to justify their Perjury.* But, pray Sir, were you ever in Company where this was actually done ? Or have you only bare *Hear-say* for so black an Accusation ? If no more, then take my *Hear-say* along with it, which I had from a *Nonjuror* ; and therefore, by your own Rule, an Honest Conscientious Man, as, bating his Recusancy, he certainly was, in the Opinion of all that knew him ; who told me what follows, as near as I can recollect, *verbatim.* *Whilst the Abjuration was taking in Dorsetshire, in the late Queen's Time, some Persons in Black, pretending themselves Clergymen, stopp'd at a Publick Inn ; and calling for Liquor, said they would wash down the Oath they had taken that Day ; with several abusive flings at the Government : When upon Enquiry, it appear'd they were not Clergymen, but some Back-Friends of another Denomination, who did it purposely to render the Clergy odious to the Government.* And why may not the like Practice be still on foot in more Places than one ?

one ? and you told for a Truth, what had really no other Ground ?

Well, but if one Story will not content you, take another, I had from a Person living in *London* at the Time ; who assur'd me, “ The
 “ Parish-Clerks complain'd loudly against the
 “ Dissenters, for coming to Church, and taking
 “ the Sacrament to qualifie themselves ; and
 “ when they had so done, watch'd their Op-
 “ portunity, and spit out the Bread and Wine
 “ upon the Place.” Now your Opinion ; Who give most Offence, and are most liable to Cen-
 sure, they that take the Oaths with a Glass of Wine, and a Scrap of *Hudibras* after ; or those that are guilty of a Crime too black to be repeated ? Nor had it been nam'd by me, but to convince you, that Faults are not *all* of one Side, nor large Bodies to suffer, for here and there a profligate Wretch's having no Sence of God or Religion.

Yet this is no baulk to you, who are for proving the Clergy Rebels, *from the late Conspiracy, under Consideration of the Parliament ; which* (say you, p. 15.) *will afford us sufficient Evidence.* Now, not to ask you whether you are turning Informer, or what great Numbers of the Clergy yet appear concern'd, or were so in the *Preston-Rebellion* ; or whether the Bench of Bishops were unanimous in acquitting the late Bishop of *Rocheſter* ? Pray, under favour, before you gallop too fast, let the Saddle be put upon the right Horse.

The

The Dissenters, we all know, being an Industrious People at turning the Penny, were as deep in the late Bubbles, even down to *the Harburgh Lottery*, (a Word to the Wife) as any of their Neighbours. When Stocks ran high, and they saw all the Wealth of the Nation flowing in upon them daily, then, *Never such a Monarch ! Never such a Ministry before !* Out-doing, if possible, their very Addresses to the late King *James* : But no sooner was the Tide turn'd, and their *Fairy Riches* gone at a Clap, put your Head into what Coffee-House you could, frequented by Dissenters, you had good luck if you heard any thing but Treason, yea, such open Treason, as a Man could not well hear without the hazard of Misprision ; which (as has been declared) being represented to the *Pretender*, gave birth to the late Conspiracy.

But, not to make a Jest of Rebellion, or an Apology for it, there are, 'tis plain, two sorts of Rebels ; one, that rebel out of a false Principle of paying their Allegiance where 'tis not due ; the other, those that rebel not so much against this or that Monarch, as against Monarchy it self ; which they rarely live quietly under, without plotting to exchange it for a Constitution of their own chusing. King *James I.* in the Book I cited, after telling the Prince, that 'tis Pride, Avarice and Ambition make Men attempt Alterations ; and what Instruments are employ'd for such purposes, adds, how the *Kirk-*

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Preachers

Preachers us'd him from his Cradle, by falling upon him at every turn in their Sermons and Harangues, for no other reason, but because he was a *King* ; in their judgment (saith he) of all Evils the greatest. (*Hinc etiam sæpius in concionibus & pro rostris me laceſſunt, non alio nomine, niſi quia Rex eſſem, quò nullum majus malum eſſe exiſtimârunt, p 42.*) And whatever was pretended all along to the contrary, the true Deſign of the Grand Rebellion, was the Fall of Monarchy, as was proved at *Cook's Tryal*, by his intimate Acquaintance, that had endeavour'd to diſſwade him from acting as he did at the *King's Tryal*. To whom the *Regicide* answer'd, *You muſt wait upon God* (the uſual Language of thoſe Saints, when they were playing the Devil,) adding, that *tho' the King was as gracious and wiſe a Prince as any was in the World ; yet he muſt die, and Monarchy muſt die with him.* Thus ſeriously to convince you, if poſſible, that *Eggs are Eggs in all Ages and Countries ; and that where Men are acted by the ſame Principles, they will be known by their Fruits ;* You ſee, I bring my Authors for what I ſay on a Subject a Reſtleſs Faction has made but too Copious.

The next Cauſe, if you pleaſe, ſhall be the *Croſs in Baptiſm ; which* (ſay you, and will not be contradicted) *we have inſeparably tack'd to a Divine Inſtitution.* An old weather-beaten Objection againſt our Liturgy, tho' rarely coming
in

in the same blunt Terms you now express it. In the *Hampton-Court Conference* (p. 69, 70.) we have it in a Paragraph, which for your sake I shall transcribe entire. Mr. *Knewstubbs* (one of the four Advocates for the Puritans) his second Question was, that "Put case, the
 " Church had such Power to add significant
 " Signs, whether it might there add them,
 " where Christ had already ordained one?
 " Which, he said, was no less derogatory to
 " Christ's Institution, than if any Potentate of
 " this Land should presume to add his Seal to
 " the Great Seal of *England*. To which his
 " Majesty answer'd, " That the Case was not a-
 " like; for that no Sign or Thing was added to
 " the Sacrament, which was fully and perfect-
 " ly finished before any mention of the Cross is
 " made.

The Issue of this Conference was, that the Four coming full-fraught with Exceptions against the Liturgy and Ceremonies, were so convinced of their Mistakes, they jointly promised *to be quiet and obedient*. Particularly, Dr. *Sparke* not only practised Universal Contormity himself, and privately by Word and Writing perswaded others to the like; but soon after published a Tract, dedicated to the King, with this Title: *A Brotherly Perswasion to Unity and Uniformity in Judgment and Practice touching the received and present Ecclesiastical Government, and the authorized Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, &c.* Where the

Subject of this Sixth Chapter is, *The Cross in Baptism* ; of the Seventh, An Answer to all Objections against it ; which none was more likely to know than himself, being noted before for a great Nonconformist, and a Pillar of Puritanism. (*Wood*, Vol. I. p. 351.)

But because I find not your *Inseparable Tack* here, let us come to our Liturgy and Rubrick ; if not here neither, for all your Confidence, the Cause must go against you. As for Private Baptism, there's not one Syllable of the *Cross* ; and yet, saith the Rubrick, *Let them not doubt but the Child so baptized, is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again.* But then (say you) why is it thought expedient to bring the Child after this into the Church ? Oh, Sir, for a very good reason, in the same Period, without a Word of the *Cross*, viz. to satisfy the Congregation, that according to the true Form of Baptism, the Child has been baptized already ; which ought to convince you and all others, of your gross Mistake ; because to the Form that gives the *Essence* to Baptism, and consists solely in a proper Application of the Element (whether by dipping or sprinkling the Infant or Adult, by what Hand is out of the Question) and pronouncing the Words of the Institution, *the Cross* is so far from being *inseparably tack'd*, that even in Publick Baptism 'tis never added, till after the Baptism it self is full and compleat, as Private Baptism is, without that Venerable Symbol, which is retained

tained purely in conformity to the First Ages; even up to the Apostolical, as the Learned Dr. *Reynolds* himself confessed at the Conference (p. 68) whilst arguing for the laying it aside.

And because some People were still uneasy, to satisfy the most Scrupulous, was that large Canon made the Rubrick refers to, by odds the largest of the whole 141; whereof I here present you with a Part faithfully transcribed, viz.

“ *First*, The Church of *England*, since the Abolishing of Popery, hath ever held and taught,
 “ and doth hold and teach still, that the Sign
 “ of the Cross used in Baptism, is no part of the
 “ Substance of that Sacrament: For when the
 “ Minister dipping the Infant in Water, or laying
 “ Water on the Face of it (as the manner
 “ also is) hath pronounced these Words, *I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the*
 “ *Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, the Infant is fully
 “ and perfectly baptized; so as the Sign of the
 “ Cross being afterwards used, doth neither add
 “ any thing to the Virtue and Perfection of
 “ Baptism, nor being omitted, doth detract any
 “ thing from the Effect and Substance of it.

“ *Secondly*, It is apparent in the Communion-
 “ Book, that the Infant baptized, is, by virtue
 “ of Baptism, before it be signed with the Sign
 “ of the Cross, received into the Congregation
 “ of Christ's Flock, as a perfect Member there-
 “ of;

“ of; and not by any Power ascrib'd to the
 “ Sign of the Cross.

Now if after such a plain and full Declaration to the contrary, you shall still affirm, that *in the Sence and Judgment of the Church, the Cross in Baptism is inseparably tack'd to a Divine Institution*; Either you are guilty of an egregious Blunder, in not distinguishing the Institution from the Office; or (which is more probable) of a downright Falshood, purposely to keep the People in Ignorance; lest they should return to the Communion of a Church that laments their Departure, and with open Arms is ready to receive them.

I cannot close this Head, without producing one Authority, against which I hope you can have no Objection, and that is, the Right Reverend Bishop of your own Diocess, in his *Reasonableness of Conformity*, from whom I have transcrib'd a Paragraph or two for your Instruction. “ Another Objection (says he, p. 59.) “ against this Sign, (*viz.* of the Cross) is, that “ it looks as if Baptism, as Christ had appointed “ it, were not esteem'd a Bond sufficiently firm “ and strong. (*Answer*) Not by us who have “ declar'd in plain and exprefs Words, that “ Baptism is compleat without it, and the Infant a Christian as much before as after it. “ Besides, we imagine such an Objection as this “ as strong, and as concluding may be made “ against you, or any who use any Prayers at “ Baptism; you know it is sufficient without
 one

“ one Prayer ; and yet this is no Objection a-
 “ gainst the use of Prayers at such a Solemnity.
 He also puts the Case of imposing Ceremonies,
 in as strong a Light as possible, and supposes,
 that the Governors of the Church of *England*
 should abuse their Authority : “ Even then,
 (says he P. 83.) “ I do not think a Separation
 “ can be justified : Because a Separation is of a
 “ great deal worse Consequence, to both Church
 “ and State, than a Compliance with Autho-
 “ rity, in what had better not have been com-
 “ manded. The Governor may transgress his
 “ Duty in commanding, and yet I may be un-
 “ der an Obligation to obey ; and the Pretence
 “ of witnessing against his Impositions, is not
 “ of half so much force as the witnessing against
 “ publick Disturbance and Disorder. Therefore
 (adds he) “ the Bishops ought still to assert that
 “ Authority they are intrusted with : They
 “ should testifie against unwarrantable Separa-
 “ tion ; they should give what Check they can
 “ to those Principles, which have brought such
 “ Confusion and Disorder into this Church and
 “ Nation ; and should resist the Designs of Evil
 “ Men, who, as they may well judge, make
 “ use of the Ignorance of some Honest Chri-
 “ stians, to over-turn our whole Constitution,
 “ and under this shelter, to strike at our very
 “ Root and Foundation”. Again, (says he,
 p. 138.) “ It is my Opinion, that there never
 “ was, nor will be a National Constitution so
 “ perfect, but that something may be added to
 it :

" it : With what Churches therefore will you
 " communicate ? If with imperfect Churches,
 " why not with the Church of *England* ? Which
 " on many weighty Accounts, deserves to be
 " consider'd by you in the first Place. If only
 " with perfect ones, where will you find them ?
 " In what happy Place, in what Climate, free
 " from Prejudice and Passion, are they seen ?
 " I wish you would consider your own Practice,
 " and see whether you can well reconcile it to
 " the Principle we are now upon ; and look upon
 " the nature and tendency of this Principle,
 " and see if you can easily reconcile it to
 " REASON and CHRISTIANITY." I fancy
 this is News to you ; if it be, pray consider
 well of it, and be just to your own Convicti-
 ons.

Well, think you, if I am guilty of a Blunder,
 am I alone ? Did not *Britannicus* say, The Scrip-
 ture asserts Three in Person and One in Essence ?
 Now let him produce me a Bible printed or MS.
 with any such Text in it if he can. But,
 pray, Sir, hear Reason without Passion. Did
 not one *Franciscus Davides*, a noted Socinian
 before you, tell *Socinus*, that *the Terms Essence*
and Person were not in Scripture ? And did not
 the Patriarch reply, that *they expos'd their Cause*
who went upon such grounds ; and that if the
sence of them were in Scripture, it was no matter
whether the Terms were or not ? 'Tis like, you
 may have *Socinus's* Works by you ; if you have,

turn

turn to Vol. I. p. 778. and see whether I am right; because, I confess, I have it at second-hand, from the late Bishop *Stillingfleet* (*Vindic. of the Trinity*, p. 118.) and for the Sence of these Terms, *Essence*, or *Substance* and *Person* being in Scripture. 'Tis strange, after subscribing Article 1. and 6. you should object, or joke upon me for a wholesale implicit Believer, when you your self are the same; nay, go beyond me much in subscribing what you seem never to have consider'd. Else, how come you to say as you do, *That the Article of the Trinity was never defin'd or explain'd by the Church*, when the *Nicene* and *Athanasian* Creeds must have informed you better, had you but reflected what it was you subscribed to in *Art. 8.*

This Oversight of yours is the greater; because in order to make it absurd and ridiculous, you were just before attempting to shew the Church's Sence in Miniature, from the Variety of Opinions among the *Athanasians*; not considering again, that you are actually arguing against your self: For what stronger Evidence can there be of the Trinity being an Article of Faith, than the different Opinions of the Learned about the manner of it?

But here, Sir, if you please, I'll help you out, for really you need it: The Explications you speak of, be they ever so many, are really nothing to the purpose; nor has the Church any thing to do with them: They are only the Conceptions of some private Persons, who ha-

ving the same modest Opinion of their Abilities, as you seem to have of your own, undertook what they had much better have let alone, to explain by *Reason* that which is infinitely above *Reason*, and wherein *Reason* is no other ways concern'd, than to discern whether it be plainly reveal'd in Scripture, or not; which, among infinite other Places, we take it to be, from the Words in Baptism, because so understood in the First Ages, as the late Bishop *Stillingfleet* fully proves in the 9th Chapt. of his Learned Vindication of the Trinity; and the present Dr. *Waterland* asserts in the *Second Defence*, p. 449. in Words so proper to the purpose, that, with his Permission, I shall transcribe the whole Period, running thus: " That
 " I may say something that may be useful to
 " common Readers, the case is thus: The
 " Faith of the Church all along was, in Fa-
 " ther, Son and Holy Ghost, One God, into
 " which they were baptiz'd: The Father was
 " not the Son, nor the Son the Father, nor the
 " Holy Ghost either of the other. This was
 " the common Faith of the Church before
 " either Person or Substance was talk'd of." Thus far the Dr. which is all the Answer that need be given to that impertinent Suggestion of yours, where you make me say, *That the Church in all Ages is agreed upon this Point (the Doctrine of the Trinity) in Sense as well as in Sound*; whereby imposing *Two Words* upon me which I use not, you would persuade the
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the Unwary Reader, that the Church had no determinate Meaning at all; because private Persons have disagreed in their Interpretations of it.

With the same honest Intention, you represent me as confounding *Inference* and *Affertion*, as if I were insensible what must follow upon such a strange Concession: For, as you rightly observe, *At this rate, any Party-Zealot of what Opinion or Perswasion soever, might easily make the Scripture assert whatever he pleases: For 'tis but to call his own Affertion, a Scripture-Affertion, or a necessary Inference from plain Texts, and the business is done* And so it were, no doubt on't: But of all Men living, I least expected this from you; because it knocks your Scheme for Liberty o' the head all at once; proving it both impracticable and inconsistent with the publick Peace.

For suppose, in order to the uniting all Parties upon *Scripture-Terms*, a General Assembly were appointed, where each Sect had its Delegates, with free liberty of speech; think you e'er a one of them all would so far betray his Trust, as to own the holding Doctrines contrary to Scripture? But after a long and fruitless Altercation, depart just as they came, only much fuller of mutual Animosities, even to the laying a Foundation for civil Broils, as such Assemblies are known to have done more than once, in *Scotland* and elsewhere.

In short, your reflecting upon others for *Swearing* and *Subscribing*, is somewhat singular, considering you have done both your self; if you repent of either, you ought to let the World know it, and not illegally enjoy the Benefit of the Act, contrary to the intent of it: For the *Proviso* is very exprefs, *That this Act shall not extend to give Ease, &c. to any Person that shall deny in his Preaching or Writing the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, as it is declar'd in the afore-said Articles of Religion.* So that unless you are true to your Subscription, you ought to shut up your Conventicle, that the People may either go to Church, or become one Assembly, as they were before your uniting Spirit had divided them: And this makes your insulting *Britannicus* for his Essence and Three Persons, the more unaccountable; because he said no more than what you have subscrib'd, and must abide by, or forfeit the Liberty allow'd you by the Toleration.

Having in my Letter (p. 19.) given some short Hints, how well you and the Author of a Popish Pamphlet agreed in your Sentiments, you tell me in your P. S. (p. 14.) *That it is all to as much Purpose, as if I had gone off from the Matter in hand, to the World in the Moon.* I have all along taken particular Care, not to say what I had no Authority for; and therefore, lest you should complain, as the *Popish Writers* did, of being misrepresented, I shall now transcribe at large,

large, what I before but briefly referr'd to: The Pamphlet was publish'd with Allowance, in 1687. under the Title of *An Agreement between the Church of England and Church of Rome*: Where the Author of the Preface, having told us that the Controversie lay only between the Church of *Rome* and the Protestant Dissenters, adds in the next Page, *That ever since the Breach between the Church of England and the Protestant Dissenters has had its Being, we have left us nothing but the Name, the Shadow of a Protestant Church of England.*

And pray how much short come you of this, when you demand of *Britannicus*, (*Enthusiasm*, p. 47.) *What upon your own Principles can you think of a Church, that claims I know not what sort of Authority, after she has given up and sworn away all Authority to the Crown? Which in your P. 5. you affirm to be Matter of Fact, undeniably plain, and known to every Body: Having told us before, (p. 8.) that no doubt but the Clergy, so far as Civil Officers, and expect their Pay from the Crown, must conform themselves in Matters of Religion to the Civil Law. I have not Leviathan by me, so cannot direct you to the Chapter, but question not its being there, being a Doctrine Hobbs is so full of; he is up with it at least Three several times in his History of our Civil Wars, P. 62, 70, 80. His Words in the last cited Page are these; We never shall have a lasting Peace, till the Ministers know they have no Authority but what the Supream Civil Power gives them: So*
you

you see you have more than one Writer to scrape Acquaintance with.

But to return to my *Romish* Author : *It's not fit, (says he, p. 78.) any particular Church should be its own Judge in its own Cause, nor any of but equal Authority, Latitude and Fallibility. One particular Church can no more judge another, that stands in the same Degree with it of Subordination, than one Man can judge another, &c. And in the next Page ; The very Disputes about the nature of Schism, when and where it is, will make Schisms without end : One Church will spit at another as Schismatical upon all Occasions, as it is now among the Protestants : Thus He. And pray do not you say the very same, (p. 44 ?) viz. Whatever the Separation be, betwixt the Conformists and Nonconformists, it is certainly mutual ; and they both equally and alike separate from one another. Suppose then, to carry on the Jest, (make you a Jest of the Difference between Protestants !)* I should set the *Kirk* of Scotland against you, and tell you roundly, that till you can prove by a clear and evident chain of Reason, that the Terms of Communion with the *Kirk* are unreasonable and sinful ; you must not take it ill to be told, that you are guilty of Schism, or a causeless Separation from a sound Branch of the *Catholick Church*. If you should say, the Model of Government and Terms of Communion in that Church, have been already sufficiently demonstrated to be unreasonable and sinful, by many Able and Learned Men : A true *Kirk-Man* will as absolutely deny this, and as
posi-

positively insist on the contrary ; and then he would be even with you, and say as much in defence of his own Church, as you have in defence of yours. Thus you. And now I leave it to the Reader, whether any Man that allows one Egg like another, will deny a perfect Harmony betwixt you? Or scruple in the least to affirm, that had any Dissenting Teacher banter'd at this rate in King James's Time, he would not have been sent for to Court, caress'd by Father Petre, and dismiss'd with a Pension, for serving the Cause as heartily as one of their own Body.

There is one merry Passage in the Preface before cited, may deserve a little notice ; where the Writer humbly proposes it to *our Nobility and Gentry, how they can with Honour renounce the Name of a Roman Catholick, unless they not only favour, but close with the Protestant Dissenters.* A Proposal well laid, and suitable to the Politicks of a Church, which at that time maintain'd such a Friendly Correspondence with the Dissenters : It might probably have kill'd Two Birds with One Stone, and brought in both together ; as I shall endeavour to shew, after a short Remark on what no one yet, as I remember, has taken much notice of. This Pamphlet or *the Agreement of the Two Churches of England and Rome*, was, as I said before, publish'd in 87. when there needed no other Evidence to the contrary, than the daily Opposition betwixt the Writers of each Communion : And *this very* Tear was it, if we may take their own Word,
(Con-

(*Considerations on the Explications of the Trinity*, p. 59.) that the *Arians* and *Socinians* began to shew themselves ; who had lain dormant in great measure from *Biddle's* Death. The Question is, what moved them to take that Time for it ? Which seems either from their observing our best Pens, and most likely to confute them, otherwise employ'd ; or set upon it by the *Romish* Party, to divide a Force they found themselves unable to engage. However, now was the Stock laid in, that was never intended to lie long upon Hand ; for no sooner was the Revolution over, than it came out very plentifully, with loud demands to be answer'd with Reason, and not put off with Jargon and unintelligible Terms. Whereupon some of our Divines thinking to undertake 'em in their own Way, for a while furnish'd fresh Matter for their Mirth ; till Scripture and Antiquity did then, as it has lately again, what all their Schemes and Explications will ever come short of.

After so Large and Orthodox a Defence of the Trinity, by the Worthy and Learned Dr *Calamy*, the Dissenters in general must not be charg'd with maintaining the contrary Doctrine ; but if the Revival of the *Arian* and *Socinian Heresies*, was really an Artifice of *Rome*, some of their Teachers cannot be so excus'd for other Reasons, besides sending such small Help as they did against Popery, when most needed, and actually taking Pay from the *Romish* Agents, to exasperate their Hearers against the Church of
England,

England by their inflaming Eloquence ; as the *Marquess of Hallifax*, the greatest Statesman of that Age, did not scruple to intimate, in his well known *Letter to a Dissenter*, written with great Life and Spirit ; to shew the danger and tendency of the Dissenters addressing the King for an *Indulgence* contrary to Law ; telling them that by so doing they manifested their readiness to take off *the Test and Penal Laws*, the only Security we had against Popery.

Tho' they knew all this as well as his Lordship, and that the like Declaration had twice before been voted *Illegal* ; and from *Coleman's* Letters, that the Papists had labour'd all along to obtain a Toleration, as the greatest Service they could do their Cause : Yet, to shew their Resolution to persist as they had begun, The Dissenters, (says Mr. *Echard*) from all Parts of the Kingdom swell'd the Gazettes, for near a whole Summer with their Addresses ; and some of them so extravagantly worded, the very King thought 'em Fulsome ; as well he might, when the *Presbyterians* told his Majesty, *He had restor'd God to his Empire over Conscience*. A Complement *Dryden* could not help smiling at, and saying, even whilst pleading for Indulgence, and perswading the Dissenters thankfully to embrace it, that 'twas a Boldness he durst not stretch the Figure to. (Preface to the *Hind and Panther*)

But of all the Addresses, we are told (*Echard*, *Ibid.*) that from Mr. *Alsop*, a Preacher at *Westminster*, was most remember'd : Which the Hi-

Historian forbears to particularize, for no other Reason as we can suppose, but because it was too bad.

As for the *Quakers*, Lord *Hallifax* observes, that of a sudden they were become for good Breeding the most accomplish'd Men in the Kingdom, gave Thanks with such a grace, in such double-refin'd Language, 'twould have been no surprize had one of that Perswasion been made Master of the Ceremonies. In short, (as my Author observes) were any Confidence to be put in Addressees, the rest of the World might naturally look upon the King as immovable in his Throne.

Now after all the Hard Names given Popery, all the Black Stories of *Q. Mary*, *Smithfield*, the *Powder Plot*, and *Irish Massacre*, frequently told their Children to prejudice them against the Church of *England*, as Cousin-German to that of *Rome*: All of a sudden, a violent Friendship was struck up, as that the Dissenters should sign Circular Addresses, drawn up by Popish Priests; (*Letter to a Dissenter* :) The Papists supply'd the Dissenters with Meeting-Houses, and hir'd some to preach in them; who gratefully acknowledged they found Popery very different from what they thought it; and that really it was quite another thing, than what they had been taught to believe it. It must be own'd, this warm fit of Friendship did not last long: No sooner was the P. of O. landed, and K. *James* ready to quit *White-Hall*, but Popery in an Instant

stant reassum'd all its former Terrors, and the *Whore of Babylon*, with whom they were just beginning to be very familiar, grew all of a sudden older and uglier than ever; then nothing but *Cauldrons, Long Knives, Protestant Bridles*, (Vid. *Old Stories that preceded the Revolution*) with other strange Instruments of cruelty to reconcile the Obstinate, which no Protestant, I can hear of, ever saw, besides the Dissenters; whose Interest at that time might let them into the Secret. Not a Word then in the sinking Monarch's Favour, to excuse the many false Steps his Blind Zeal, Evil Counsellors, and their Flattering, or (as some call it) Lying Addresses had betray'd him to, and he confided in, till too late to know his true Friends from his worst Enemies: But I forget my self, and am sensible you will say that this is no more to the Purpose, than if I had gone off from the Matter in hand to the World in the Moon.

As for the celebrated Maxim, which you call *an old exploded senseless Axiom, so far from being most certain, that it has nothing of Truth or common Sense in it*. I hope you will not say it is the less true, for being *old*; nor ought you to call it *exploded*, because some have oppos'd it, without considering how many Philosophers of the first Form, both of the last and present Age, have stood up stiffly for it; particularly among our selves, Mr. *Hobbs*, Mr. *Locke*, and Mr. *Glanvil*. But what will not a Man of your *invincible Confidence* say, after having said as you do of

our Articles, Canons, and Rubrick; that 'tis only a Complication of Absurdity and Impudence, an affronting the Understandings of Men, and a most ridiculous banter upon Common Sence ?

There is something like a piece of Wit, or you certainly thought it so, toward the End of your P. S. where by way of Triumph you tell me, *the Business of the Spirit is dropp'd, without one Rational Soul to speak in its behalf*, or to that Effect. To talk to you of the Ancients, is lost Labour ; as most of them talk Greek or Latin, you are, I presume, too much a *fine Gentleman* to have any Conversation with them ; if you had, you would blush, if possible, at your Ignorant Confidence : But there is a worthy Person now living, whose Learning and good Sence, I presume you will not question ; because your Friends give out you are honour'd with his Friendship : I mean the Learned Dr. George Cheyne, who in his *Philosophical Principles of Natural Religion*, Part II. from p 101, to p. 116. has treated that Noble Subject with the Accuracy of a Philosopher, and the Piety of a Christian ; and which none of your Infidel Tribe, has ever been hardy enough to attack. I have transcrib'd what follows to employ your Meditations.

Page 101. Prop. 21. " In all intelligent Be-
 " ings, there must be Faculties fitted for all the
 " several Ranks of Objects in the *Universitas*
 " *rerum* ; that is, since there are evidently Three
 " Ranks

“ *Ranks of Objects in the Universitas rerum :*
 “ To wit, *The material System* of Things, *the*
 “ *spiritual World* of created Spirits, and *the*
 “ *supreme and absolute Infinite* Intelligent Beings,
 “ must necessarily be fitted with Faculties suit-
 “ ed to these three Generical Ranks of Objects :”
 Which he demonstrates to P. 105. *Corollary I.*
 “ Hence we may conceive the Reason why in
 “ *Holy Writ*, the whole Man is distinguish’d in-
 “ to *Body, Soul, and Spirit.* *Coroll. II.* As there
 “ are Three different Principles, Orders or Præ-
 “ dicaments of Being; *viz. God the Creator of*
 “ *all things, created Spirits, and material Bodies :*
 “ So there are analogically in Compounded
 “ Intelligent Beings, *Three* different and distinct
 “ Principles, adapted and appropriated for com-
 “ municating with, and enjoying these respec-
 “ tive Objects : Whereof every one is endow’d
 “ with proper Senses, Powers and Faculties,
 “ different and distinct from each other. *Co-*
 “ *roll. III.* Hence we may deduce the true and
 “ genuine Nature and Extent of the *Degenera-*
 “ *cy, Corruption and Fall* of the Human Race
 “ of Intelligent Creatures, which consists in
 “ the *Confusion, Discord, Rebellion and Contra-*
 “ *riety* of these different and distinct Principles,
 “ one with and against another ; in throwing
 “ off that *due subordination, subjection* and pro-
 “ per *Rank and Order*, that was originally esta-
 “ blish’d among these Faculties, according to
 “ the *Dignity* of these different Objects : The
 “ *Order of Nature, and the Analogy of Things,*
 “ and

“ and following the practical Dictates and
 “ Conclusions, deduced from these Rebellious
 “ Faculties. P. 108. *Prop. II.* The Rational
 “ Soul, is not that Faculty in compounded In-
 “ telligent Beings, which in the Order of Na-
 “ ture and the *Analogy* of Things, is appropri-
 “ ated to the Spiritual World, (including the
 “ Supreme Infinite at its Head.)

Demonstrat. “ Tho’ this be a necessary Co-
 “ rollary from the preceding Proposition, yet
 “ since it is of great consequence to trace Divine
 “ Knowledge, to have its Truth establish’d be-
 “ yond all possibility of Cavil ; I shall here
 “ suggest some other *Mediums*, or set those al-
 “ ready suggested in another Light ; from
 “ whence the same *Conclusion* may be deduced.
 “ And *First*, This is evident from the Nature
 “ of this *Faculty*, and the manner of its opera-
 “ ting. *Reasoning* is the *comparing* or *considering*
 “ the *congruity* or *incongruity* of the Perceptions
 “ suggested by the Senses, or of the *Idea’s* lodg’d
 “ in the Memory, or painted on the Imaginati-
 “ on, to one another ; and *Reason* is the Facul-
 “ ty whereby this is performed. Now the
 “ Senses send in only the *influxes* of Material
 “ Things, and the *Imagination* and *Memory*, pre-
 “ sent only their *Pictures* and *Images*, when the
 “ Objects themselves are absent ; and here is
 “ all the *Rational Soul* can do: But nothing of
 “ these belong to the *supreme* and *uncreated In-*
 “ *finite*, nor the *spiritual World*.

“ *Secondly*, It is acknowled’d by all, and
 “ every one’s Experience demonstrates it to him,
 “ that the *Rational Soul* is fitted for communi-
 “ cating with the *Material World*. Now since
 “ *Body* and *Spirit* are precise and proper Op-
 “ posites, it would be as *dissonant* and *incongruous*
 “ in the *Analogy* of Things, that the same Fa-
 “ culty should be the Principle of Communica-
 “ tion with these two Objects; so widely dif-
 “ ferent, as that the Eye should both Hear and
 “ see. It is true, it may be said, that the *Ra-*
 “ *tional Soul* might have been originally en-
 “ dowed with such Energy and Capacity, as to
 “ be fitted for communicating with both Worlds.
 “ But this is meerly *gratis dictum*, and perfectly
 “ contrary to the *Analogy* of Things; it being
 “ impossible to bring an Instance of Nature,
 “ where Things so widely distant and precisely
 “ opposite are received by one and the same
 “ Faculty: We see in the Body, or lowest part
 “ of the Human Composition, that it is instru-
 “ cted with *Organs*, fitted for all the possible
 “ Ways material Things can act upon it; and
 “ they are not near so widely distant and diffe-
 “ ring in their manner of operating, as Bodies
 “ and Spirits in their Natures are.

“ *Thirdly*, There is a twofold Knowledge of
 “ Material Things, one *real*, when the Thing
 “ it self, and the *real* Action and Impression
 “ thereof on our Senses is perceiv’d; the other
 “ *Ideal*

“ *Ideal*, when the *Image* or *Idea* of a Thing
 “ absent in it self, is represented to, and consi-
 “ dered on the *Imagination* : For Instance, the
 “ *Heat, Light, and Chearful Influences of the*
 “ *Sun* shining on us, are widely different from
 “ the View and Consideration of its *Image* or
 “ *Idea* on our Fancy. In the *Analogy* of Things,
 “ and according to the constant Order of *Na-*
 “ *ture*, such must our Knowledge of *spiritual*
 “ Objects be, *viz.* The one *Real*, when the
 “ Objects make a real Impression upon the *ap-*
 “ *propriated Faculty* ; The other *Ideal*, when
 “ we frame a Notion of its absent Substance
 “ and Qualities. Now it is very plain the *Ra-*
 “ *tional Soul* is not fitted for this first kind of
 “ Knowledge or Perception of *spiritual* Objects ;
 “ since a great many *Philosophical and Learned*
 “ *Men*, who have exercis'd this Faculty in its
 “ greatest Strength and Vigour, have denied
 “ the Existence of such Objects.

“ *Fourthly and Lastly*, That most certain and
 “ self-evident *Metaphysical Axiom*, *viz.* *That no-*
 “ *thing can be in the Understanding, that was not*
 “ *first in the Senses* ; is a certain *Demonstration*,
 “ that the *Rational Soul* is not the Faculty in
 “ intelligent Beings, *appropriated* to the *spiritual*
 “ *World* : For every Body allows, that *spiritual*
 “ Beings, as such, can never be conveyed thro'
 “ Bodily Senses to the Understanding. And
 “ therefore, we must either be entirely depri-
 “ ved of Faculties for communicating with *spi-*
 “ *ritual*

" *ritual* Beings, (that is, we must be depriv'd
 " of the only means of our *supreme Felicity*;
 " and for which alone we were created,
 " *viz.* Communicating with *the supreme and*
 " *absolute Infinite Spirit* :) Or else we must be
 " endow'd with Faculties distinct from the Ra-
 " tional Soul for that purpose. Upon all which
 " Accounts it is evident, *beyond the most re-*
 " *mote possibility of Doubt*, that the *Rational Soul*
 " is not that Faculty in compounded intelligent
 " Beings, which in the Order of Nature, and
 " the Analogy of Things, is *appropriated* to
 " the *spiritual World*; but that they are en-
 " dow'd with a *Rational Soul* and Bodily Sense
 " to communicate with the *material World*; and
 " with a *Spirit* and *Divine Senses* to communi-
 " cate with the *supreme Infinite*: So that the
 " mention'd Metaphysical *Axiom*, continues
 " just and true, as it should according to the
 " *Analogy of Things*; That as *material Things*
 " are convey'd to the *Rational Soul* through
 " the *Bodily Senses*, so *spiritual Things*, (those
 " that relate to the *supreme Infinite*, are con-
 " vey'd thro' the *Divine Senses* to the *Spirit*.)
 " *Q. E. D.*" Thus far Dr. Cheyne.

You see, Sir, *Britannicus* is not singular in
 his Opinion; and let me advise you as a Friend,
 not to condemn hastily what you have not con-
 sidered; as you have done here in more Instan-
 ces than one.

H

And

And now, being upon the Point of taking my leave, you must not think I have treated you too roughly, if you do but reflect that you were the Aggressor: You fell upon *Britannicus* unprovok'd; and that not in the entertaining Stile of a Candid Writer, that was zealous for Truth, but with such a Mixture of Malice and Insolence, that plainly discover'd you as much an Enemy to his Person as his Principles; and that you were resolv'd, if possible, to blast at once the Reputation he has so deservedly acquir'd, and which you can never hurt but by speaking well of him. In order to this, you undertook what you call *An Examination of the Reflections upon Reason*: Where without any regard to the Design of the Whole, or the Connection of the Parts, you only pick'd out here and there a Passage; which, in contempt of Truth, Good Manners, and Common Sense, you put into as ridiculous a Light as you could, and then invited your Readers to laugh at it; and according to your usual way, (as Mr. Fancourt observes, *Enthus. retorted* p. 21.) *not only stifle Evidence, but which is worse still, charge against Evidence, against the clearest Evidence to the contrary*

Thus (p. 7.) you say, *He takes it for granted, that there are as many different Senses and Acceptations of the Word Reason among Men, as there are different and contrary Opinions in the World*: Whereas, this was in truth the very Absurdity that he was exposing and confuting; as any
Man

Man may see that can read P. 3, 4, 5. of the *Reflexions*.

P. 14. you tell him, *that a Fundamental Error in his way of reasoning with the Deists, is the visible partiality he all along discovers, in charging their Lusts and Vices on their Principles*; whereas it appears that he asserts the direct contrary, P. 16, 17, 21, 39, 40, 41, 42, 73, 74. charging their Infidelity upon their immoral wicked Lives.

P. 16. you assert *Deism and Natural Religion to be the same thing*: If you mean *Modern Deism*, which is the Thing in question, it is a gross Fallacy, to say no worse, (*Vid. the Learned Dr. Clark's Boyle's Lectures, p. 18.*) which will convince any sensible honest Reader how much you are mistaken in asserting, p. 17. *That (Modern) Deism is a good and sufficient preparative for Christianity.*

P. 18. you say, *The first Principle he lays down as the Foundation of the Christian Faith, is, that there are certain unintelligible Doctrines in the Christian System, which being absolutely above and beyond all Human Reason and Comprehension, we are yet requir'd to believe, as necessary to Salvation.* This you charge upon him as his own Assertion; whereas, had you read with common Attention and Ingenuity, you could not but perceive, that he mentions it as a prophane Objection of the Infidels whose Stile he uses, and against whom he is disputing.

P. 54. Your prophane Drollery upon the Distinction betwixt *Body, Soul and Spirit*, disco-

vers deplorable Ignorance of the Scriptures; and your *D*icicle falls as heavily upon St Paul, as upon *Britannicus*. Read and consider 2 *Theff* 3. *Heb* 4. 12. *Rom* 8. 16. 1 *Cor*. 1. 2. *Jude* V. 19. and compare them with the 3^d Chapter of St. *John's* Gospel, and let your next Learned Labour be to shew, that they were all a pack of Enthusiasts; or else learn to be a more modest Man, and a better Christian than you seem to be at present.

However, that we may rightly understand one another at parting, permit me to tell you, that I hear you are strangely fond of the Last Word, as a Right you have acquir'd by Conquest: Upon that Head we shall not differ; for I am now abundantly convinc'd of the Truth of an Observation made by an Honest Wagg of your own Party, who knows you much better than you seem to know your self, *That disputing with you was like hunting a Pole-cat, where a Man was sure to get nothing but dirt and stink*: So that now you may write on, the Day's your own; you are as safe as if you had actually bury'd me alive; and from henceforth, I shall never think that worth Answering, which hardly one Man of Sence thinks worth Reading. I am,

10 JA 66.

Sir,

Your very Humble Servant,

Bristol,
Jan. 29.

Peter Nisbett.

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